

1.933
P92

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LIBRARY



BOOK NUMBER

1.933

P92

728279

**PRESENT STATUS OF
CHEMICAL BRUSH CONTROL ACTIVITIES**

November, 1949

Prepared By
Technical Standards Division
Rural Electrification Administration
United States Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C.

PRESENT STATUS OF CHEMICAL BRUSH CONTROL ACTIVITIES

REA-financed power systems have an enormous brush control problem. In July 1949, it was estimated that more than 200,000 miles of their electric line rights-of-way were covered with woody growth. The control of this growth constitutes a major part of line maintenance costs.

During 1949, at least 48 REA-financed power systems utilized chemicals for the control of woody growth on rights-of-way. Although a few power systems applied a small quantity on a test basis, most of those reporting used chemicals on a larger scale. Reports have been received from 22 of these power systems to date. One power system used Ammate, 21 used a combination of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T esters, and one used 2,4-D alone for most of its chemical brush control work. Power system operators who had experience with chemical control prior to 1949, are convinced that the chemicals used this year were more effective than those used previously, but most are of the opinion that the herbicides now available will not effect complete control of all species.

Over 3600 miles and 700 acres of right-of-way were reported by the 22 electric cooperatives as having been treated with foliage sprays, applied during the growing season. The use of a mileage unit or an acre unit depended on the distribution of woody plant growth, the former unit being desirable where

growth was scattered or in a row, the latter in forested areas where it is necessary to clear a swath through more uniformly distributed brush.

Comparing the above use of chemicals with that in 1948, REA records show that 13 cooperatives reported the use of chemicals in 1948, treating 320 miles and 400 acres of right-of-way with foliage sprays. In 1948 six of the cooperatives obtained 2,4,5-T and seven used 2,4-D alone or Ammate alone. Of the power system managers who have at this time reported the use of chemicals this year, most are convinced that chemical brush control affords the cheapest and most practicable method of control and intend to continue with the use of chemicals. Present labor costs make the cost of manual cutting higher than chemical control in most localities, except where cheap labor is available. The main disadvantage of mechanical or manual cutting is its failure to kill, a more dense regrowth occurring after each cutting. A few cooperatives, concerned with the apparent failure of present herbicides to effect one hundred percent kill of all species, are investigating the use of bulldozers for reclearing. In North Carolina it was found that contract bulldozing could be done for \$37 per acre, the cost comparing favorably with contract spraying when a 50/50 combination of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T was used.



